

For Immediate Release

Rainier, Tenino and Bucoda Designated Thurston County Substance Abuse Prevention Sites

OLYMPIA—The communities served by the Rainier and Tenino school districts have been selected to receive additional support to create healthier communities by keeping youth, young adults and others free from the abuse of alcohol and other drugs. The support, which includes funding for training, technical assistance, and community- and school-based substance abuse prevention programs, comes from the state Department of Social and Health Services' Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery (DBHR).

Community prevention activities will be managed through Thurston County Public Health and Social Services in collaboration with two community coalitions that will be formed in Rainier and Tenino/Bucoda. The coalitions will consist of youth; parents/grandparents; educators and schools; law enforcement officials; faith leaders; civic/volunteer groups; representatives of sovereign tribes and local government; business and the media; substance abuse prevention and treatment organizations; and youth-serving organizations. TOGETHER!, a nonprofit organization dedicated to mobilizing the Thurston County community to prevent youth violence and substance abuse, is coordinating the new coalitions. Community members are invited to be involved with planning and implementing these programs.

The school-based efforts are managed by Educational Service District 113 in collaboration with local school districts and the community coalitions. Staff specialists in adolescent substance abuse prevention, intervention and treatment will be assigned to serve middle and high school students. One specialist will serve youth in the Rainier School District and another will be in the Tenino School District. The districts are providing office space and additional support for the specialists.

"A number of factors were considered in selecting the communities served by the Rainier and Tenino School Districts for services," said Sherri McDonald, Director of the Thurston County Public Health and Social Services Department. "Data provided by DBHR was obtained from the Community Outcome and Risk Evaluation Geographic Information System. Community selection was based on an analysis of a number of risk indicators, including school absenteeism, abuse/neglect, families receiving state assistance, and below-average academic performance. A community's readiness to benefit from these services was also examined during this process."

"Our goal in redesigning and targeting our state prevention services is to leverage enough resources in the highest-need communities to achieve greater reductions in substance abuse and the harm it causes," said David Dickinson, DBHR's Director. "Community leaders are prepared to use these resources to help more young people succeed, and to improve the health and safety of their community," added Dickinson.

The new Rainier and Tenino coalitions will engage community members to address key measures of youth health, safety and success, including reducing underage drinking among 8th and 10th graders, improving academic performance, and reducing juvenile delinquency. DBHR will expand this effort in the next three years to identify approximately 50 high-need communities in Washington. The Rainier and Tenino efforts are anticipated to continue through 2016.

State and county data from the 2010 Washington State Healthy Youth Survey will be released in April and is available [online](#). Tips for parents to help prevent underage drinking can be found at www.StartTalkingNow.org.

To find out how to get involved with the Rainier or Tenino coalitions, contact TOGETHER! at (360) 493-2230.

For more information regarding prevention and intervention services for adolescents, contact ESD 113 True North Student Assistance and Treatment Program at (360) 339-8100.